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GARDNER COLBY

A TRIBUTE

TO THE MEMORY OF

GARDNER COLBY.

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GARDNER COLBY.

GARDNER COLBY was born in Bowdoinham, Me., Sept. 3, 1810. His father, Josiah C. Colby, was a well-known citizen of the town, and was for several years successfully engaged in the building of ships, and in business enterprises connected with owning them. He possessed a comfortable home, held some public offices, and exerted considerable influence both at Bowdoinham and in the neighboring town of Bath, to which his business extended. In 1807 he was married, at Charlestown, Mass., to Miss Sarah Davidson. Her father was Jesse Davidson, who had formerly lived at Nottingham West, N.H., but had afterwards removed to Boston, and then to Charlestown, and had died a few years before the time referred to. She was one of six orphan sisters, and was about sixteen years of age at the time of her marriage. Bright, enthusiastic, and capable, she made her new

home in Bowdoinham attractive to all, faithfully discharged the duties of superintending a large household consisting in part of her husband's employees, and delighted in the grace of hospitality. Gardner, the subject of this sketch, was the second of her four children. Among his earliest recollections he cherished pictures of that old-fashioned home, the bustling scenes of the ship-yards, and a trip with his father down the river to Bath. But a dark cloud soon gathered over the bright prospects of his childhood. During the war of 1812 his father lost his property and his business by the depreciation of shipping that was kept in port by the embargo, and by the capture of several vessels at sea by the foreign privateers. Crushed by disappointment and failure, his energy and courage never rallied; and it was not long before Mrs. Colby found herself dependent upon her own energies for the support of herself and her four young children. Though less than twenty-five years of age, she addressed herself heroically to the task. At first at Bath, and then at Waterville, she opened her little store, working early and late in the presence of the greatest hinderances and discouragements. At the latter place Gardner, then a boy of about twelve years, worked in a potash-manufactory. In after-years he remembered the weariness of bringing up one hundred pails

of water from the river each day to empty into the vats, and of his chopping the wood for the family all winter. Occasionally he turned an honest penny by setting up pins in a bowling-alley. His mother seems to have early impressed upon him the habits of concentration, energy, courage, and hope, which characterized herself, and which became so conspicuous in his later life. It is worthy of mention, that among the incidents which he recalled of his boyhood at Waterville was an illumination of the college-building, when "there was as much as one candle in each window," and when all the people were full of enthusiasm. They did not imagine that the poor hard-working boy, least noticed, perhaps, among them all, would be the means under God, in after-years, of helping that institution of learning to shine with a stronger light.

After living about three years in Waterville, Mrs. Colby was compelled, by an accumulation of trying circumstances, to make another change of residence. Having taken counsel with Dr. Jeremiah Chaplin, the president of the college, and others who had shown themselves her friends, she determined to remove to Boston. She was obliged to seek homes for her children in different families until she should be able to gather them together

again in a home of her own. A Mr. Stafford, who a short time before had removed from Waterville to St. Albans, kindly took Gardner, and agreed to give him his board for what work he might be able to do. In an autobiographic sketch still treasured in the family, she describes the bitterness of her parting from him. "Before letting him go," she writes, "I took him alone. We knelt down, and with my hand upon his head I committed him to the God of the fatherless and the widow. I had been weighing the probabilities as to how long it would be before I could reasonably expect to see my child. It did not seem possible, that, even if I were prospered, I should be able to take him to myself for years to come." It would be apart from our present purpose to describe in detail the struggles through which she passed in the following months. It is sufficient to say that she went to Boston with but a few dollars in her pocket, and with a letter of introduction from Mrs. Chaplin to Mrs. Deacon Farwell of Cambridge, whose husband she speaks of as "that man of blessed memory;" that by her indomitable energy and skilful tact, aided by the encouragement of these and other friends, she established herself in business, first in Boston, and afterward in Charlestown; and that, contrary to her expectations, she did not have to wait much more than

a year before she was permitted to gather her children again around her, securing them a home either in her own economical household or in families in the immediate vicinity. Coming from St. Albans in Maine, Gardner went, on his arrival at Boston, to the book-store of his mother's friends, Messrs. Lincoln & Edmands. John Wiley Edmands, a boy not much older than himself, a son of a member of the firm, kindly agreed to show the way to his mother's home in Charlestown. As the two boys walked across the bridge together, — their conversation on the way interrupted by the ridicule of the enemy, for there was a feud between the Boston boys and those of Charlestown, — they formed an acquaintance with each other which proved to be the beginning of a life-long friendship. In after-years they were associated in business enterprises, and as neighbors in the homes which they built and adorned at Newton. Soon after coming to Charlestown, Gardner attracted the attention of Mr. Phelps, of the firm of Phelps & Thompson, grocers in Charlestown Square. An arrangement was made by which he was to have a place to stay in, and an opportunity to go to school. He was to work in the store when out of school, and get his board with "very kind people." He had been so sadly deprived of schooling in his childhood, and was so

behind other boys of his own age in the knowledge of books, that he labored under great disadvantages in the public school. He had to leave school about the age of fourteen. He then received his clothing as well as his board for his work in the store. His energy and determination to please made him useful to his employers. He was sent out with a wheelbarrow to collect orders, and deliver goods at the houses of customers. He remembered wheeling a barrel of flour up Bunker Hill, and on another occasion trudging with his heavy load over the bridge into Boston, even as far as Winter Street, where an old lady kept a shop. This he thought was rather a severe task; but he was stout and strong, and prided himself on the skill with which he could whirl ten or fifteen heavy boxes of sugar into or out of the store without aid. He was so anxious to accomplish work, that even when he might have been at leisure he sought something to do in the cellar or garret of the store, that might tend to promote the convenience and despatch of business. A love of order kept him always "clearing up" and "putting things to rights;" and whatsoever his hand found to do, he did with all his might.

When he was about sixteen years old he began to realize the defects of his education. He

longed for some personal and skilful attention to his wants in this respect. So his mother finally managed to send him for a time to a private boarding-school in Northborough, Mass., where he diligently improved the opportunities given him. It was during this winter, 1827–8, that he executed the "Emblem of the United States," which in its frame still adorns one of the rooms at Newton, and bears witness to his unusual proficiency in penmanship. He thought it was at Northborough that he received his first deep religious impressions. It was while he was listening to the preaching of a minister by the name of King. Becoming somewhat interested in the needs of the church there, he made a plan for a new house of worship, — the first experiment of a special talent for which he afterwards found larger opportunities. But his stay at Northborough was very short, not exceeding six months. He was unwilling to be longer dependent upon his mother, and was anxious to secure some position in a business-house where he might not only be earning his own living, but have good prospects of advancement. The meagreness of his schooling he regretted throughout all his life. "If I had only had an education!" he would often exclaim. But those best acquainted with him will probably agree that he was specially adapted to a

life of business, and that the early concentration, under Providence, of all his energies upon that one line of effort, was a large element in his success. As the years went by, also, he evinced many of the qualities which are often obtained only by a familiarity with books. We might illustrate this by referring to the clearness and conciseness of his statements of his views upon any subject in which he was interested, the correctness of his language, and the excellence of his taste. These traits are doubtless to be attributed partly to natural gifts, partly to the severe intellectual training he obtained in commercial affairs, and partly to his intense interest in educational institutions and his habitual friendship with educated men. Christian purposes and refined associations were an effective school for the development of his powers both of mind and heart.

On his return from Northborough he obtained a situation as clerk in the dry-goods store of Mr. Foster, No. 107 Washington Street. His mother was still keeping her store in Charlestown, where she lived. His custom was to go home to dinner every day, hastening back so as to be absent but an hour from business. In the evenings he kept his mother's books. Healthy, active, and ambitious, he threw his whole soul into his work, thus securing the confidence and favor of Mr. Foster, whom he

was accustomed to speak of as a very kind man. One day while his employer was in New York, he sold a bill of goods to a lady customer from "down East." It amounted to five hundred dollars. He thought that he had done a grand thing; but, when he told Mr. Foster of it, he received the gentle reply, "It is no good." So indeed it proved. "This," he said, in relating it, "made me feel badly, but it took me down, and did me good." Not long after, Mr. Foster went out of business, giving it to his brother and a former salesman. The firm became Houghton & Foster. They moved to a new place of business, on Washington Street, opposite the head of Water. Mr. Colby continued with them, upon a salary, until he started in business for himself.

The religious impressions received while at school at Northborough were deepened under the faithful preaching of Rev. Henry Jackson, D.D., who was at this time pastor of the First Baptist Church in Charlestown. The result was that on the twenty-fifth day of April, 1830, in the twentieth year of his age, and while he was a clerk with Houghton & Foster, Mr. Colby made a public profession of his faith in Christ, and united by baptism with the Charlestown church. He had little to say at the time of his reception. He was not skilful in the analysis

and description of subjective experiences; but he often spoke in after-life of the decided change which then came into his heart, and of the joyful relief which he found in his first apprehension of Christ as his personal Saviour. Every thing around him, he said, seemed to be rejoicing. He became a man of prayer. Religious aims sanctified his ambition. That his consecration of himself to the service of his Lord was at that time heartfelt and profound, the remainder of his life bore witness.

Not long after he united with the church, an incident occurred, which, in the light of his subsequent activity in the cause of ministerial education, may be regarded as prophetic. He was accustomed himself to refer to it as the beginning of his interest in all such things. It is here given as related by Mr. Ebenezer Thresher of Dayton, for many years a warm personal friend of Mr. Colby: —

"DAYTON, O., June 20, 1879.

"You request me to give you my recollections of an incident in the early life of your late father, to which he was accustomed to refer as having had a determining influence upon his future Christian life, and with which he was pleased to associate my name.

"The Northern Baptist Education Society, with

which I became connected as corresponding secretary in 1830, had the opportunity of assisting a large number of young men in their studies preparatory to their work in the Christian ministry; and it required extraordinary efforts to meet the demands made upon the society. The amount then appropriated to each young man, annually, was seventy-five dollars. This amount was called a scholarship; and it was the habit of the secretary to solicit individuals and churches to take one or more of these scholarships. Your father, then in his minority, was a member of the Baptist Church in Charlestown, and was known to the secretary as a Christian young man of more than ordinary promise; and he requested him to undertake the collection, in the church of which he was a member, of one hundred and fifty dollars, that is, two scholarships. He cheerfully accepted this service, and accomplished his object in a single day, a holiday, in which he was released from his engrossing duties as clerk in a dry-goods store, and in the accomplishment of which he felt great satisfaction. It was my privilege to enjoy an intimate and lifelong acquaintance with your late father, and his life has been an inspiration to me; and I hope it may become such, especially to the young men of the Baptist denomination.

"Ebenezer Thresher."

The holiday referred to was Thanksgiving Day. Mr. Colby himself gave five dollars of the amount he raised. It was a large subscription for him at that time; but he always insisted in after-life that small means are no excuse for not giving, and that, if young men do not begin to give away money when they have little, they will not be likely to do so when they have acquired much. In connection with the letter above quoted, it may be of interest to add, that the writer of it, now living at an advanced age, has had for the last twelve years as his own pastor one of Mr. Colby's sons.

When he reached his majority he felt anxious to engage in business for himself. He was confident that with the experience he had obtained he could win success. He talked of renting a store on the corner of Washington and Bromfield Streets; and Mr. Foster, his former employer, kindly introduced him to influential business-men in the city, from whom he sought advice. Some of these doubted the wisdom of his project: one of them said decidedly, "That is too expensive a store for you. You had better go to some place not so central, where your rent will be smaller." One of them, however, Mr. James Reed, said, "What do you think about it yourself? Have you thought it all over carefully, and do you think you can succeed?"

— "Yes, sir," was his reply. "Then," said Mr. Reed, "go ahead, and consult no one." "This," said he in after-years, "was just the sort of advice I then needed. It encouraged me in self-reliance, and made a man of me." There were a hundred and fifty dollars salary due him. This amount, together with a small sum which he borrowed from his mother, constituted the whole of his money-capital. But, what was worth far more to him, he had a good reputation for promptness, energy, and uprightness. He purchased a small stock upon credit, and opened his store, having tacked up tablecloths over the large number of empty shelves, — those in the front of the store only being filled with goods. The realization that he was incurring considerable expense in his rent, large for those days, and his great dependence at first upon his credit, operated together with his ambition to make him exceedingly watchful and laborious. He made laces, gloves, and hosiery a specialty. His store soon became headquarters in the city for these articles. His trade was chiefly with ladies, with whom he gained the name of being very polite and obliging, as he would get them any thing, or send any thing to their houses. Over his clerks he kept a sharp but kind scrutiny: they must always be behind the counter, ready any moment

for business. The cost and price of every thing at time of sale were put down; and the cash was balanced every night, so that he always knew just where he stood. To one practice especially did he attribute much of the success of his first venture in business, and afterwards frequently recommended it for the adoption of young men. He did not wait for his notes to become due; but as soon as he had money he would advance payments upon them, and by means of these advances secure from his creditors a corresponding extension of time for the payment of the balance. This made every one ready to sell to him, and provided against embarrassment in unexpected difficulties. At the end of the first year he had paid all his expenses, and had cleared a profit of about four thousand dollars. The second year his success was even greater, and thus he continued to be prospered. Mr. Arthur Tappan, to whom he showed his trial-balance, said, "Mr. Colby, you will fail. No young man can stand such prosperity." He replied, "I do not mean to fail, because I mean to keep on the same careful plan upon which I have begun."

In 1836 he had acquired sufficient means to warrant his undertaking a larger business enterprise. To save commissions paid to importers, he had begun early to import goods for himself. When

Mr. Henry Thornton, afterwards well known as the head of one of the largest business-houses ever built up in England by an American, first went out from this country, Mr. Colby gave him the largest order he took. The step, therefore, was a very natural one, by which, when he left his retail store on Washington Street, he became an importer of dry goods on Kilby Street. Though almost at the outset he had to encounter the financial crisis of 1837, he was able to outride the storm. In those days English steamers came only to Boston. Customers came from New York and other places, and waited for the arrival of the steamer to see the pattern-cards. When they came to the store, he would take the first comer into his office, lock the door, and give him the first selection; then the next, and so on. He continued to carry on business with the greatest zest, and found his labors rewarded by large returns.

On the 1st of June, 1836, just after he had entered the importing business, he was married at Gloucester, Mass., to Miss Mary Low Roberts, daughter of Major Charles L. Roberts of that town. He had first met her during the previous autumn, when she was visiting at the house of Mr. Nathanael R. Cobb, in Brookline, with whom her brother Charles was associated as a junior partner.

The choice was a singularly happy one. She had become interested in evangelical truth under the preaching of Dr. Spencer H. Cone in New York, where her brother lived, and had been the first person baptized into membership with the Baptist Church of Gloucester. She was thus ready to sympathize with her husband's religious views and purposes, as well as to make his home a constant comfort and delight. As she survives him, it may not be fitting here to enlarge upon her special adaptedness to be his partner for life; but all who knew them both have marked that fact. In the spirit and movement of their life they were one. The forty-three years which passed between their marriage and Mr. Colby's death were made beautiful by the tenderest affection; and until that event the happiness of their home was not shaded by a single domestic bereavement. They commenced housekeeping in No. 32 Temple Street, and became by letter members of the Federal-street Baptist Church, of which Rev. H. G. Nott was the pastor. After a little more than three years they moved to Roxbury (now Boston Highlands), where they united with the Dudley-street Baptist Church, then under the pastoral care of Mr. Caldicot. During their residence there, in the cottage still standing at the corner of Dudley and Kenilworth Streets,

many intimate associations were formed, and incidents occurred which were pleasant for them ever afterwards to recall. Specially worthy of mention is the remarkable revival which prevailed for two years in the church. In its labors and blessing they were both active participants. Mr. Colby brought the same enthusiasm to the meetings which he carried to his store. He had also already become known as a generous giver. Some of his contributions to benevolent objects at Federal Street had been so large as to occasion surprise, and to cause him to be sought out by the agents of Christian enterprises needing aid. About this time he was made treasurer of the Northern Baptist Education Society, in which he always felt the liveliest interest.

In the spring of 1841 his business made it desirable for him to visit Europe, and it was decided that Mrs. Colby should accompany him. Providentially, they could intrust their two children to the care of her sister, Miss Frances L. Roberts, who then, as afterwards, till her death in 1873, made her home with them. Indeed, without some mention of the amiable character and self-denying fidelity of "Aunt Fanny," as she was familiarly known, no story of the family life could be complete. Mr. and Mrs. Colby sailed from Boston in May. At Halifax

the steamer ran upon the rocks, so that they were detained there some days; and the pleasure of the voyage was further marred by the severe seasickness to which he was always subject. Reaching England, they visited the manufacturing cities where he had correspondents; and, after short trips to Scotland and Paris, they returned by a tempestuous voyage to Boston. They were absent from home only three or four months; but the business objects of the journey were accomplished, and many pleasant pictures were stored up in the memory for future enjoyment.

In the autumn of 1844 he again transferred his residence to Boston, to No. 12 Pemberton Square, where he lived for two years and a half. During this time two events occurred which should be chronicled. One was the building of the Rowe-street Baptist Church. The Federal-street Society had been agitating the subject of a new house of worship; and, soon after he became a worshipper again among them, Dr. Hague said to him, "Mr. Colby, if the new church is going to be built, I believe Providence lays it upon you to be chairman of the building-committee." Though engrossed in his business, he accepted the trust, contributed generously, spent much time in the examination of plans and contracts, and went morning and evening

to superintend the workmen, so that he was accustomed to say that he saw every stone that went into it. The other event was the entertainment at his house of Dr. Adoniram Judson, who, after more than thirty years heroic service as missionary to Burmah, was then making his only visit to this country. On the voyage hither he had stopped to bury the second Mrs. Judson on the rocky island of St. Helena. He was accompanied by three of his children. "Among the millions," says Dr. Wayland, "who had known of his labors, and revered his character, probably not fifty had seen him. A new generation occupied the places of those venerated men who were the active supporters of missions at the time of his embarkation. Hence the desire to see him was intense. Men of all professions and of all beliefs were anxious to make his acquaintance. When he arrived in Boston, before coming on shore, he was much troubled with the apprehension that he should not know where to look for lodgings. The idea that a hundred houses would at once be thrown open to him, and that as many families would feel honored to receive him as a guest, never entered his mind." This honor Mr. Colby and his family enjoyed. Of course their house was a centre for the time of great interest. A crowd of visitors came to it. Words from the

good missionary's prayers, as at the family altar he sought Heaven's blessing upon the family of his host, have been cherished in memory as a precious benediction. "May they," he said, "and their children, and their children's children, in every generation, to the end of time, follow each other in uninterrupted succession through the gates of glory." Letters afterwards received from him, from Burmah, bear witness to the Christian friendship that had been formed between the two men. "What would I not give," he wrote, in closing one of them, "just to look in upon you at Pemberton Square an hour! May every blessing be with you all until we meet in glory! Yours ever affectionately, A. JUDSON."

Here may be the place to record the fact that Mr. Colby became, soon after this, a member of the Executive Committee of the American Baptist Missionary Union, and continued for several years to perform faithful service in that capacity. A few years before his death he was the largest single contributor to its funds.

In 1844 he accepted another responsibility which had an important bearing upon his subsequent course. Nathanael R. Cobb and Deacon Levi Farwell were the men who carried the burden, in connection with its professors, of Newton Theologi-

cal Institution in the early years of its history. Through their solicitation Jonathan Batchelder of Lynn, Michael Sheppard of Salem, and others, were led to contribute to it. Mr. Cobb died in 1835, less than ten years after its founding. Then every thing fell upon Deacon Farwell, who gave his mind, his heart, and his property to fostering it, and caring for all the details of its affairs. When he died in 1843, Rev. Ebenezer Thresher took his place for one year at the request of the board of trustees. His health did not permit him to become the permanent treasurer, and in 1844 Mr. Colby was elected to that position. Mr. Thresher, referring to the condition of the Institution at that time, says, "No one will ever know how much work Mr. Colby had to do." There were the buildings, cattle, utensils, and crops of the farm to be looked after, a steward to be employed and directed, difficulties arising from the boarding of the students in commons to be settled, and the board-bills of the students to be regularly collected. These details often required great care, patience, and tact. In addition to them was the great burden of financial management. The funds were rapidly decreasing. The salaries of the professors were altogether inadequate, and the property was groaning under mortgages. During the summers of 1845 and 1846, desiring to take his

family to board for a few weeks in the country, he selected Newton Centre as the place, as indeed throughout those years any opportunity to ride out from the city was always made the occasion of an official visit to the Institution.

In 1847 he decided to move to the country for his home. He was led to take this step by his anxiety for his four young boys. Both his wife and himself have would preferred to continue in the city on account of its social privileges, and the greater convenience of a residence there to his business engagements; but every thing had to bend to the moral welfare of his children. His watchful eye detected already the insidious influence upon them of certain city temptations. Once resolved upon a rural home, his connection with the Institution of course determined him in his choice of a locality; although at that time Newton Centre was a small isolated village, and a ride of two miles in an omnibus, as well as seven miles in the cars, was necessary morning and evening in order to his daily trips to the city. He occupied a house near the base of the Institution hill for a year and a half, at the expiration of which his new house upon the land which he had purchased a mile distant was brought to completion, and he moved into it, there to reside until his death. Admiring visitors to that home can

scarcely understand the transformation the place has undergone in these thirty years. When he bought the thirty-six acres of land, ten of which were wild woodland, and the lower portion of which was cultivated as a farm, the remaining portion where the house now stands was nothing but an open pasture with a few old apple-trees along its edges. The stately elms and pines and maples which now cast their shadows across the lawn, or embower the garden-walks, together with the large variety of fruit-trees and vines and shrubbery, were all planted under his personal direction. Their grouping and distribution, every curve of every path, each peculiarity of stone wall or rustic fence or arbor, or opened vista through the foliage, as well as the structure and ornamentation of the house itself, are the creations and expressions of his own thought and taste. He watched the growth of the trees from year to year almost as he watched the physical development of his children. He took delight in driving a fleet horse, and in observing the few sleek Jersey cattle which he kept; but he was never disposed, as some are, to make extravagant outlays of money in that direction. His chief recreation was in the enjoyment of nature, and in landscape art as far as it is the imitation of nature, and not its manipulation. Often after a long weary

day at business in Boston, he would sit under the shadows in the summer twilight, his mind, it is true, not altogether free from great plans and anxious study about business, — for it was the misfortune of his temperament, that the excited brain would often work intensely far into the night, — yet soothed and diverted by the calm and freshening scene around him. Then it was that he delighted to talk and frolic with his family, to hear reports from his sons concerning their different enterprises, to give them his practical counsel, to watch the play of his little grandchildren, and to welcome the calls of his friends and neighbors, his pastor, or the professors of the Institution. Conversation with the latter about church or educational matters was for him a useful diversion from the cares of office or store. How much reason for gratitude has every member of his family, that he so early selected and improved a suburban residence! His decision has often been justified by its effect upon their health, their happiness, and their character. How great a tonic and safeguard, too, it was to his own physical and intellectual strength during the period of his intense business activity, none can ever estimate. The comfort it gave him during his last years was beyond expression. He had then built a house for his eldest daughter, Mrs. Arthur C. Walworth, close

by his own ; and her little children furnished entertainment for him in his playful moods. Among pleasures and palaces where'er he roamed, his heart still turned fondly to Newton, and it was a cause of thankfulness that he was permitted there to breathe his last. It seems to those who loved him, and whom he loved, as if every part of the house and grounds bore the impress of his strong mind and affectionate heart, and as if every rustling breeze was almost whispering his name.

It was also a home of generous hospitality. At the anniversaries of the Institution it was always crowded with guests. That was the great occasion of the year for the household. A very large number of Newton alumni will remember not only their cordial welcome there during their student-life, but also their entertainment within its walls when they returned from year to year, their host enjoying their visits quite as much as, if not even more than, they did. Ministers and foreign missionaries especially were made to feel that they were there giving as well as receiving pleasure. As the house in Boston had been the home of Dr. Judson for a time, so that at Newton welcomed his widow for a protracted stay, and also afforded a place for rest and recuperation to the venerated Dr. Oncken of Germany when, during his visit to this country, he had been injured

in the terrible disaster at Norwalk on the New York and New Haven Railroad.

When Mr. Colby moved to Newton Centre, the financial condition of the Baptist Society there was exceedingly feeble. It consisted of the professors, who were laboring under the burden of great anxieties; and of several other families, mostly farmers, who either had not realized the necessity of generous and systematic plans for meeting the current expenses of the church, or had not the talent and energy to execute them. They had agreed to pay their pastor four hundred dollars a year, but they were many months behindhand in their payments. His business mind at once took in the situation, and chafed under it. "Brethren," he said, "this will never do. Your pastor's family is in need, and the church is becoming disgraced. You must all raise your pew-taxes at once." The extreme conservatism of the society made at first considerable opposition to what some regarded as the rather officious suggestions of a new-comer from the city. But soon all concurred in the correctness of his judgment; the advance was made, and almost all felt happy about it. From that time he was the acknowledged leader in every thing pertaining to the business of the body. They learned that his outspoken directness was accompanied with good-nature, and they

were pleased to find how much sometimes was accomplished under his leadership. This was notably the case at the time of the remodeling of the meeting-house. It sadly needed repair, but nearly all thought the church was too poor to have it done. He pondered it until he had thought out an economical plan, offered to give generously himself, and then, measuring in thought the purse of every man, suggested what seemed to him to be within their reach. Falling in cheerfully with his proposition, they committed the superintendence of the work into his hands; and the remodeled building has continued to be a comfortable place of worship to the present time, although before his death Mr. Colby felt that the time had come for a new one, and made some provisions in his will for a contribution to that end. He felt a strong personal attachment to many of his brethren in the church, and would often speak of the value which he placed upon their character and friendship. They may have thought him at times a little exacting and headstrong, yet he yielded without hard feeling to the opinion of the majority. An illustrative incident may here be introduced as related by Dr. Stearns, who was pastor at the time the meeting-house was remodeled: —

"Following the plan of his favorite architect, Mr.

Esty, a cross was to be placed upon each of the towers. The senior deacon, who was a member of the building-committee, had seen the plan, and had accepted it, but had failed to notice the two crosses. The reconstruction went on, and the two crosses took their predestined place. A few days afterwards the deacon, who lived some two miles away, rode into the village, and was appalled by the sight. He believed that the church had now gone over bodily to Romanism, and was so troubled about it, that, although a very reticent man, he did not fail to allow his thoughts expression in very strong language. Mr. Colby heard of the fact, and at once, with another brother in the church, sought an interview with the good deacon, and tried to convince him that it was all right; but he would not be convinced. The next morning the deacon, Mr. Colby, and myself met in front of the meeting-house, and the matter was talked over again. Finally a compromise was suggested, — the removal of the cross from the lower tower, suffering the other to remain. The deacon reluctantly assented. Mr. Colby saw instinctively the disfigurement which would thereby be occasioned, the discrowned tower resembling a smoking-cap rather than any thing else; but, turning to me, he said, 'Decide it. The carpenter is there now. If you say so, down it

comes!' I assented for the sake of harmony; and he at once exclaimed, 'Cut it down!' and it became what it is. But he went away the happiest man of the three, and never referred to the scene again except jokingly. I recall this incident as illustrative of his firm yet conservative individuality, an individuality which shaped his piety, and the manifestation of that piety by his benevolent acts."

It should be added to the incident here related, that, so far was it from lessening the regard which Mr. Colby and the deacon felt for each other, they continued to the end of their lives to be true and appreciative friends.

As treasurer of Newton Theological Institution he continued for more than twenty-four years to discharge the duties of his office, not merely with fidelity, but with a degree of consecration and ability that will never be forgotten. The discouragements which he encountered in its financial condition at the outset were so great that many of its best friends had said that the only thing to do was to dismiss its professors, and close its doors. "I shall never forget," he once said, "the meeting of the trustees, at which it was almost agreed to give up. I got up crying. I was a young man among old ones, but I could not stand it to hear them talk so. I said, 'There is only one thing to be done.

You, Dr. ——, must take this subscription-paper, and go around among your people.' — 'No, never,' was the reply. 'I can never do that.' Turning to Dr. ——, the pastor of another prominent church in the city, I said the same thing. He, too, shook his head. And yet that meeting was the starting-point. We first tried a fifty-thousand-dollar subscription, but could not make it go. At one time the institution owed me thirty thousand dollars. How I was able at that time to spare such a sum from my business, I am sure I do not know; but in some way the Lord helped me through it. Afterward we planned and started the one-hundred-thousand-dollar subscription. Thirty-two thousand of it were subscribed in the trustees' meeting; but to get the rest of it, was a great undertaking. How I worked over it, nobody will ever know. But the Baptists came up nobly."

Other subscriptions were afterwards planned and carried through. Under his management also some portions of the land were well sold; and a new building for library, chapel, and recitation-rooms was erected. To this the name of Colby Hall was afterwards given by the trustees in acknowledgment of his contributions and services. President Hovey in his historical address in 1875, at the fiftieth anniversary of the Institution, said of him,

"The finances of the school were managed by him with extraordinary skill during almost a quarter of a century. Not a penny was either lost or wasted. Vigilance, promptness, personal supervision, were everywhere manifest. The lands, buildings, investments, students, and even the professors, seemed to be under the treasurer's eye from September till June. With inexhaustible vigor and hope he sustained the burden that was laid upon him, and secretly rejoiced, I doubt not, in the opportunity of expending a part of his superfluous energy for so good a cause. To serve a good cause is indeed the highest glory of man; and to serve such a cause with unconquerable purpose, and inward assurance of success, has been the rare privilege of our brother. The treasury was strengthened by his administration; and we are indebted, under God, to him with a few others, for the preservation of our cherished school in the darkest hour of its history." When the one-hundred-thousand-dollar fund was raised, he gave three thousand of it. In 1864 he subscribed to the new library building eleven thousand. Later to the two-hundred-thousand-dollar fund he gave eighteen thousand. Other gifts also he made to the Institution, besides a large bequest in his will; and to all these must be added the value of his services in inspiring others to contrib-

ute to its funds. He loved it as he did the church of which he was a member, and all the interests of the kingdom of God. He was treasurer until 1870, when, at the death of Rev. Baron Stow, D.D., he was made president of the board of trustees, with which office he continued to be honored until his death.

To return again to the time when he moved out to Newton: the dry-goods importing business in which he had been engaged for ten years was soon after given up by him, and he retired with a handsome competence. Though he thus found relief from the routine of the store, he continued to be a very busy man, going to Boston every day to attend to various enterprises in which he was interested. Others sought his counsel in their pecuniary affairs, and his retirement from business was made the reason for committing to him important trusts. He used at the time to remark that he had more work to do for other people than he had formerly had to do for himself. In 1850 he went into regular business life again. He purchased one-half of the Maverick Mills (now Merchants' Woollen Company), of Dedham, Mass. He thus became associated in business with his neighbor and early friend, Hon. J. Wiley Edmands, in the manufacture of woollen goods. He was himself the selling agent

in Boston of the manufactured goods, being in the wholesale commission business, first on Milk Street, and afterwards on Franklin. No business house stood higher for fidelity and earnestness. The demands of the government for soldiers' clothing during the war made it highly lucrative during the latter part of his continuance in it, when also he had the satisfaction of associating with him his eldest son, who, in company with others, afterwards succeeded to the business in New York and Boston. During the great national struggle he was firmly and enthusiastically loyal to the government, and was a large contributor to the various patriotic charities which the war called into existence. A Webster Whig in his early life, he became afterwards a firm member of the Republican party, interested in all the great movements in national affairs, and having decided opinions upon every issue; yet he never became at all prominent in political strife, or an aspirant for political honors. In 1863 he again retired from business, if that expression could ever be used of one so intensely active in disposition. He now devoted himself to the care of his investments in manufacturing, mining, and railroad companies, and in real estate. He was also interested in shipping, in connection with his son Charles, who was in that business in New York.

A fine vessel, a ship of about twelve hundred tons, had been built, to which his name had been given; and it was a pleasant thought to him, that upon the first voyage which the "Gardner Colby" made to Calcutta, his young friends Rev. C. H. Carpenter and wife were passengers going out as missionaries to Burmah. It would have been well, if, after his retirement from the wholesale commission business, he could have contented himself in his comparative freedom from anxieties without subsequently incurring heavier responsibility. He was now fifty-three years of age; he had been almost uninterruptedly successful, and might have enjoyed, so far as we can see, an honorable and useful leisure for the rest of his life.

In 1864 he made his notable gift to Waterville College in Maine. The occasion of his first forming the generous purpose is interesting, and illustrates the method of divine Providence in using the brief words of men for producing important results, and of causing seed-truth to germinate years after it has been cast into the ground. It was the evening of the day of prayer for colleges. The late Dr. Samuel B. Swaim was present at the prayer-meeting, and related, as in harmony with the thought of the hour, an incident which occurred in his early ministry at Portland. As he entered, he said, the house of one

of his parishioners for a pastoral call, he met Dr. Chaplin, then president of Waterville College, just about to leave it, evidently an unsuccessful solicitor for aid in behalf of the college. As he stood there, hat in hand, he groaned out, "God help Waterville College!" The picture of the self-denying and earnest servant of Christ standing in that doorway, and thus giving vent to his over-burdened heart, had remained indelible in the memory of Dr. Swaim; and of course he described it with earnest feeling. Mr. Colby was present at the prayer-meeting, and heard the story and its application. That night meditating upon his bed, as he was wont to do, sleepless and restless, he finally said to his wife, "Suppose I give fifty thousand dollars to Waterville College." Always ready to encourage him in any noble purpose, she gave her approval to his thought. He continued, as the days rolled by, to think of the matter. He considered what might be the results of the gift, and what would probably be the sad results unless he or some one else should come to the rescue of that seat of learning. He had been acquainted with its history. He was a native of Maine. As a boy he had lived at Waterville; and the president, Dr. Chaplin of whom Dr. Swaim spoke, had early befriended his mother in her struggles. He

was interested in the cause of Christ in that portion of the country, and in the growth of the State in power and culture. He believed that it furnished some of the best material for useful, educated men. He had learned to regard with esteem some of the graduates of Waterville with whom he had become acquainted at Newton ; and it was a pleasant thought to him, that he might not only relieve a useful school from a dangerous financial embarrassment, but in doing so confer a great benefit upon many worthy poor young men such as he himself once was. The more he thought and prayed over it, the clearer the conviction became that God called upon him to do it ; and the next August the gift was made. Thus the exclamation of the hard-working and perhaps desponding president, related years after his death to a little group assembled for prayer, was the seed-thought from which germinated an answer to the petition which it breathed. Rev. J. T. Champlin, D.D., president of the college at the time of Mr. Colby's gift, writes as follows : —

"At the commencement in August, 1864, I received from him, and read at the dinner, the following communication : —

"'WATERVILLE, Aug. 10, 1864.

"'REV. J. T. CHAMPLIN, D.D.

"'*My dear Sir*, — I propose to give Waterville College the sum of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000), the same to be paid without interest as follows, viz.: —

"'Twenty-five thousand dollars when your subscription shall amount to one hundred thousand dollars, independent of any from me;

"'Twenty-five thousand dollars when one hundred thousand is paid on your subscription, not including any from me: and upon the condition that the president and a majority of the faculty shall be members in good standing of regular Baptist churches.

"'If either or any of these conditions are broken, the entire fifty thousand dollars shall revert to myself, or my heirs or assigns.

"'I remain,

"'Yours very truly,

"'GARDNER COLBY.'

"The charter of the college being a general one for academic purposes, this last condition was introduced as the simplest and most effectual way of securing the denominational interests of the institution. The other conditions were soon fulfilled, and

the munificent gift secured. In consequence of this gift, the trustees, at their annual meeting in 1866, voted to apply to the legislature of the State for an act changing the name of the college to COLBY UNIVERSITY; and the act was passed in the following year.

"Mr. Colby's benefactions did not stop here; but in each of two subscriptions, one to complete the payment for the Memorial Hall and increase the general funds, and the other to erect Coburn Hall, he gave ten thousand dollars, besides five hundred dollars a year to the library for ten years.

"These subscriptions, making in all seventy-five thousand dollars, were all promptly paid.

"In 1865 Mr. Colby was made a trustee of the college, and continued to serve as such to the end of his life. He never failed to be present at the annual meetings as long as his health allowed, and contributed largely to the wisdom and success of all the measures entered upon. And not only as a trustee, but in all the relations and intercourse of life, he was an active friend and helper of the University. He not only gave liberally himself to the institution, but to my knowledge influenced many others to do so. In his death the University has lost not only a bountiful benefactor, but an able and judicious counsellor.

"J. T. CHAMPLIN."

It should be added that the perpetuation of his name by changing that of the college to Colby University was entirely unsolicited by him. He was also an earnest worker upon the board of trustees of Brown University at Providence, R.I., where two of his sons were graduated. Both institutions were remembered in his will; Colby University receiving the largest bequest, and Newton and Brown each an amount half as large. He once said to one of his sons, "I suppose people will think, that, because I give more to Waterville than I do to Brown, I have a greater desire for the prosperity of the former than I have for the latter. That is not the case. If I know my own heart, I have a deep affection for both; but Brown is surrounded by a large number of wealthy men who profess to be its friends, and from whom large gifts to it may reasonably be expected, while Waterville is by no means so favored. It has seemed to me therefore to be my duty, as a native of Maine, to plant the largest sum there."

His fondness for business and for large enterprises would not allow him to be contented out of business but about six years. He had formed in early life no taste for literary occupations, and his intense activity for so many years had unfitted him for a life of leisure. "I had rather wear out than

rust out," he used to say; and, "I am so constituted that I believe I must live and die in the harness. I do not care to make more money for myself or for my family; but it is pleasant to have it to give away, and I always enjoy the work of a great undertaking." In 1869 he made a trip West to look at the St. Croix & Bayfield Railroad, in which he had some interest. He then drove across the country from St. Paul to Bayfield on Lake Superior, through the forest, making the trip in about a week, camping out nights, or sleeping in Indian wigwams. He staid several days at Bayfield. The fresh air and the outdoor exercise, and the novelty of that sort of life, charmed and invigorated him; and he returned home very enthusiastic about that country, and very sanguine about its future.

Shortly after this the Portage, Winnebago, & Superior enterprise (now the Wisconsin Central) was brought to his attention. The line was located partly through the very country over which he had travelled. The road was to run through the forests of Northern Wisconsin; and, according to official reports from the Land Office at Washington, the land-grant was of great value and magnitude. He then made another trip to Wisconsin, in company with other gentlemen; and the result was that he took hold of the enterprise with all his usual energy,

determined to make it the great work of his life. It promised very well at the first, and for a year or more he found great pleasure in the employment which it gave to mind and body. It opened up an entirely new field of activity for him. He made many new acquaintances, and among them are numbered some of his warmest friends.

To construct this railroad large sums of money were needed. When the work commenced, funds were easily raised. Railroad securities were considered among the safest and most desirable investments, and were easily sold at good prices. Early in 1872 there began to be a decided change. The "Alabama" claims excitement in England suddenly ruled out all American securities from that market; and from that time for five or six years, there followed in rapid succession a series of disasters and financial revulsions which are unparalleled in the history of our country. The fire in Chicago, the fire in Boston, the money panic in England and on the Continent, and the great panic in New York in 1873, — all these supplemented by hostile legislation in the West, and a general prostration in business, caused the ruin of many great and promising enterprises, and sadly crippled the Wisconsin Central Railroad. In Mr. Colby's younger days he scorned obstacles, and laughed at difficulties. He

then never seemed happier than when hard pushed. He had always before been equal to any emergency. But this constant and prolonged strain upon his mind proved too much for the strength of his body, and he gave way under the pressure of anxiety and care.

He always had great faith in the merits of the enterprise, and invested his own money in it freely. He realized that many of his friends and acquaintances had put in their money by reason of their confidence in his sagacity, — though he was careful not to urge any to invest in the road who were not able to subject their money to the ordinary risks of all such financial enterprises, — and, whenever new calls for funds had to be made to meet the requirements of the work, he always headed the list himself, and gave the highest prices. He bought a large amount of bonds and stock of this company, and never sold any of either. He never received any compensation for the years of service and labor which he rendered; and, although he at different times indorsed the company's paper for large amounts, he never charged any thing for the use of his name and credit.

His thought and care were always more for his friends who had invested, than for himself; and it was his solicitude for them, and his anxiety on

account of their losses, which preyed upon his mind, and finally destroyed his health. He said to his son Charles, who has succeeded him in the presidency of the road, "Be careful always that no member of my family ever makes a dollar out of this road unless every one who is interested in it makes his equal proportion." How persistently he struggled against overwhelming odds, and how patiently he endured the mortification and sorrow of defeat, but few of his best friends can ever appreciate. Yet he was defeated only in his confident purpose to make the road immediately a great financial success. He had the satisfaction of seeing it completed and in full operation before his retirement from the presidency, and could console himself with the expectation that other persons would at some time reap large benefits from it. Towns and villages are rapidly springing up along its line; and, as the country develops, its business is steadily increasing.

Though possessed of unusual vigor, and of a ruddy countenance, he had not been in good health for years. He had always been subject to severe sick-headaches, and occasional violent attacks of dyspepsia. The necessity for his complete retirement from business became evident in 1876. In the autumn of that year he passed through a long

and dangerous illness. At times scarcely any hope was entertained of his recovery. Such had been his active temperament, that his friends had expected he would be impatient and desponding under such encroachments of disease; but the contrary proved to be the case. From the beginning of his confinement to the house, he resigned himself to the situation; and, though often suffering the intensest pain, he awaited with great calmness the decision of that Providence whose guiding hand he felt sure had led him thus far in life. At last his naturally good constitution had so rallied under the best medical care and good nursing, that he was able again to ride about, and occasionally to make a trip to his office in Boston. His physicians, however, forbade his giving any attention to business; and anxious friends perceived that any attempt to do so produced at once unfavorable re-action. His will to work was unbroken, but the strength to endure it was gone. That he was thus laid aside, made him at times feel sad; but his bodily weakness welcomed rest, and he contented himself as well as he could with the diversions of a quiet life. In the latter part of January, 1877, he was able to go to New York; but returned sooner than he expected, owing to the death of his neighbor, and long associate in business, Hon. J. W.

Edmands, by which event he was much affected. About this time he wrote to one of his sons as follows: —

"My own health, I think, is still improving; but at times I feel a little discouraged that I don't get up faster. I see so many things to do, that it makes me uneasy; but I try to be patient and quiet. I leave many things to take care of themselves; rather, I should say, I leave them in the hands of that kind and ever-blessed Father who has ever taken care of me for more than sixty-six years, day by day and night by night, and has done more for me than I could ever have wished or thought. Cannot I trust him now, and for the future? I feel that I can. Christ is every thing, and I am nothing. I want my dear children to feel this more and more for themselves. . . . Be bold and fearless for the truth."

By the advice of his physician, he made, the following winter, a journey to the South. He stopped at Columbia, S.C., where his brother Rev. Lewis Colby was then in charge of the Benedict Institute for freedmen; and reaching Florida he sojourned there for a few weeks. He thus avoided the severity of the winter at home, and seemed somewhat improved in health. During the next summer he enjoyed the usual visits of his chil-

dren and grandchildren at Newton; but when the autumn again came round he was persuaded to take his wife and his youngest daughter, and spend the winter abroad. Something of the kind seemed necessary in order to occupy his mind, and to keep him from becoming absorbed in the business cares which were so injurious to his health. They sailed from New York in October. After a pleasant voyage across the Atlantic, they visited London and Paris, and lived for some weeks at Nice in the South of France, where the mild breezes from the Mediterranean seemed to do him good. They then went to the chief cities of Italy, to Genoa, Pisa, Rome, Naples, Florence, Venice, Milan, and Turin. Though an invalid throughout the journey, he enjoyed some things greatly, and was especially interested in Rome, returning quite enthusiastic about the sources of instruction which are there presented to a thoughtful mind. They reached home in July. He seemed better, but during the following winter the struggle with ill health continued. The comforts of home, the sympathy of friends, the satisfaction which he took in the educational institutions he had fostered, and his deep interest in the affairs of his sons, served in a measure to cheer the weary days. In March he made a visit with his wife to New York, which he

particularly enjoyed. He met many of his old friends, and was encouraged by finding that he could attend successfully to a few business items. But it was only for a few days. He was taken suddenly worse, the attack this time taking the form of a disease of the stomach; and it was with difficulty that he reached his home at Newton. Every thing possible was done for his relief, but with no success. The recuperative powers had been exhausted, and his whole physical system was giving way. When it became evident that his end was approaching, the absent members of the family were summoned by telegraph; and all of his six children but his youngest son (who, on account of his great distance, arrived a few hours too late) were able to be around him in his last hours, to receive from his lips expressions of affection, and to minister as far as was possible to his comfort. Permitted the use of his mental faculties almost to the last, he seemed to be aware of his condition, and declared his willingness to depart. It was on the morning of Wednesday, April 2, 1879, that he welcomed his pastor to a final interview. He also said a few tender words to the servants of the household. To his wife and children he had declared that nothing gave him so much satisfaction, as he looked back over his life,

as the deeds he had tried to do for Christ and his cause. Yet he did not rely upon these as the ground of his acceptance before God. Repeated affirmations of his sense of his personal unworthiness, and of his trust in Jesus as the needed and only Mediator between God and men, were summed up in his words, more than once repeated, "I am nothing, Christ is every thing." He responded heartily to the repetition of familiar promises of Scripture. The voice of prayer was gratefully welcomed, and seemed to soothe him. Referring to the change he was soon to meet, he said, "This is a step." A moment afterwards he added, "But not in the dark." Early in the afternoon he fell into a slumber; and as the shadows of evening were beginning to gather around his home, his life's day was ended, and his spirit passed peacefully to its reward.

The funeral services were held at the house, on the afternoon of Saturday, April 5. A large company of friends and neighbors, old associates in business from Boston, and representatives of the institutions he had loved, gathered to show their respect for his memory, and their sympathy with his afflicted family. The face of the deceased wore a calm and lifelike expression. A large bouquet of pure-white lilies stood near the head of

the casket, and a wreath of passion-flowers lay upon it. It was a special gratification to the family, that four of the ministers who had been Mr. Colby's pastors could officiate on the occasion. Dr. Clarke, the pastor of the Newton Centre Church, took the direction. The hymns, "My faith looks up to thee," and "My soul, be on thy guard," both favorites of the deceased, were sung. Dr. Hague offered the prayer. President Hovey and Dr. Stearns both made feeling and appropriate addresses, and Dr. S. F. Smith offered prayer at the grave. The burial was in the beautiful Newton cemetery, upon the lot which, years before, he had himself selected and enclosed.

The facts here sketched in outline, and the memories which they will awaken in the minds of those who knew him, will be to all such a sufficient reflection of Mr. Colby's character. Yet some special mention of the chief features of his character may not here be out of place. In every thing he was a man of integrity, force, and faith. In business, in the family, in the church, and in all public duties, these traits were constantly exemplified.

As a business man, he worked incessantly, and infused the same spirit of enthusiasm and determination to succeed into those associated with him. He had a well-disciplined mind in commercial plan-

ning, and a remarkable faculty of looking at the probable or possible result that might follow from certain observed conditions of trade or of the market. Hence, while he worked with great spirit, he was generally prudent. He sometimes made the remark, "I might have made a great deal more money at that time if I had not been so cautious;" but he never regretted such caution, for it also secured the success of the movements he decided on. He would always look for himself upon all sides of a proposed course of action, and would never make any investment upon the judgment of other people. When he had thought a project through, then he was ready to bend every energy to work it through. He pressed on when others were disheartened, and was loath to admit that there was any such word as "fail." His high sense of honor, and his strict regard for truth, on all occasions, won him the respect of men. He was very positive in his opinions, and liked, of course, to have his own way in matters in which others were associated with him; but they generally had to acknowledge the soundness of his judgment, and were remarkably ready to follow his lead. He had great confidence in his own sagacity, and power to achieve. Sometimes this would provoke a smile from others; but the result generally justified him.

As a buyer, he was skilful and foreseeing; as a salesman, he was unusually persuasive. With those in his employ he was fair and strictly just. Kind and considerate to every one who tried to do his best, he had no patience whatever with those who were disposed to be slack and careless. The mistake of his life, of course, was his entering at the age of sixty upon a new and herculean effort; but it must be admitted that the complication of obstacles which then interfered with an immediate success was such as rarely occurs in the financial world, and could hardly have been foreseen by any one.

In his religious character his individuality was equally marked. He always maintained the same earnest and outspoken allegiance to the truths he early espoused. In business and abroad, as well as in the church and in society, he was never ashamed to let men know that he was both a professing Christian and a Baptist. The type of his piety was not meditative and introspective, but practical and executive. The question with him, in religion as in business, always was, What is to be *done?* rather than, What is to be thought? and when he saw that an undertaking was really necessary and desirable for the furtherance of his Redeemer's kingdom, he delighted to tax himself with the problem how it could be accomplished. This

disposition to look outward, rather than inward, had much to do towards making him a very cheerful man. When any financial difficulty arose in the church, or any new enterprise was needed, such as the clearing-off a debt, or the building or remodeling of a house of worship, he was ready not only to give liberally, but also to study out the most harmonious and effective methods of raising the money, as well as of its most economical expenditure. We have seen that he was chairman of committees for these purposes, both at Rowe Street and Newton Centre. But, while executive characteristics were the most striking in his religious character, they were by no means the whole of it. He attended regularly not only at both services of public worship on the sabbath, but also at the weekly prayer-meeting. Although he was very timid and embarrassed in any effort to express his thoughts in the latter, he was determined to impress upon his family his appreciation of such gatherings, and to give his pastor and brethren the encouragement of his sympathizing presence, as well as to obtain there the help which he felt he needed in his own spiritual life. Through all his intense business career, he kept up the practice of leading his family in prayer at the family-altar. He was always deeply interested in all efforts for the

spiritual welfare of his fellow-men in all parts of the earth. No heart beat with a readier assent to proclamations of gospel truth, and no eyes more quickly filled with sympathetic tears at the narration of personal religious experience.

In his family life he presented a combination of strictness and playfulness. He was uncompromising in his insistance upon obedience from his children, but at the same time won their confidence by affectionate familiarity. They were given to understand that there was to be no deviation from the principles laid down: yet he was reasonably indulgent, and ready in every hour of leisure to be a happy participant in their frolics. He was always stimulating his sons to independent thinking and acting. "Boys," he would say, "be something! Do something in the world! Strike out for yourselves! Don't lean on me." He gave his children to understand that he desired for them all, first, a devout Christian character, and, second, a life of great usefulness.

In society he was a genial companion. His countenance easily broke into a smile, and no man laughed more heartily than he over any thing humorous. But a word or a thought approaching that which is indelicate or vulgar was always disgusting to him, and frowned upon as ungentlemanly and wrong.

On the boards of public institutions, when an emergency arose he generally had some movement to propose. Possibly some thought him officious at times in his confident leadership; but, if the cause of his readiness had been inquired into, it would have been found, that, while others had postponed the practical consideration of the matter until the meeting, he had already been anxiously pondering it, and had thought out the only feasible plan. It was his promptness to attack the problem, rather than rashness, that had made him the man for the hour. He was ready to undertake great tasks assigned him, but he did not like to be tied up with others in working. "It is not of much use," he said, "to put me on a large committee, and oblige me to consult with them. If any thing is to be done with which I am identified, I must plan and execute it myself. My friends may misunderstand me. I cannot help it. If any thing is to be accomplished under my supervision, I must do it all myself." He regretted his inability to smooth the way, by the skilful use of language, for startling or unpopular propositions when he had determined to make them. He may thus at times have been blunt, and may even have seemed to some dictatorial; but practical tests never failed to develop the strength of his good-nature, and to show that he did

not intend to be imperious. He never willingly disregarded the feelings of others, and quietly yielded if the majority overruled him.

By his benevolent gifts he made his influence felt in a great variety of directions. The world did not know, and never will know, many of the deeds by which he brought relief and joy to burdened hearts. He found his reward at the time in the happy consciousness such acts gave him, and many were the grateful acknowledgments which came to him from the recipients of his kindness. In regard to his methods of giving, we may quote the language of Dr. Stearns, uttered at the memorial meeting of the Boston Baptist Social Union, of which Mr. Colby was one of the founders: —

"His large donations were mainly within the sphere of his own denomination. His smaller ones were not thus limited, while those smaller ones unseen by the public eye in the aggregate amounted to a very large sum. After he became known as a man of wealth, the drafts upon him in this respect were constant. Some men give solely by impulse. Start the tear, and the purse opens. Some men are more generous than beneficent. Emotional, they trust to the honesty of the pleader for help, though he may be an impostor. They pour out their treasures spasmodically and thoughtlessly, and some-

times cast their pearls before swine. Other men are more beneficent than generous; that is, they give as they transact business, according to receipts and according to relative claims. They wish to know, first of all, where it is wisest to place their gifts. Mr. Colby belonged to the latter class. He would not give what was not his own. He would not promise to give under uncertainties. He looked the claim through for himself, and then graduated his action by its relative merits and his ability to meet that and other kindred demands. I never knew him to give much without careful inquiry, but once. A letter from a father, personally unknown to him, requesting aid for his son in college, secured a hundred-dollar check by return of mail. Speaking of it afterwards he said, 'I fear I was unwise. I let my heart control me.' And, knowing the case better than he, I assented to the unwisdom.

"Another characteristic of Mr. Colby's benevolence was what may be called *provisional giving*. I do not mean that all his gifts were conditioned, especially the minor ones; but when he saw more was needed than he purposed to give, or was able to give, as a rule he made his gifts dependent on the gifts of others to the same object. I have often laughed with him for his persistency in this

method. A plan for the case in hand was sketched. He thought it out, said what each man could do or ought to do; and church and congregation were down on his list with each man's due set off against his name. He became the grand assessor; and, what was most remarkable, when the soliciting committee came round, nearly every one appealed to acknowledged the justice of the assessment. He was born to lead.

"Let me name one more characteristic. He gave *fore-sightedly*. All his larger gifts assumed that type. Where will my work do the most good in the rolling of time? How may I by divine help stretch myself into the future? The colleges and seminary he aided, and other beneficent institutions, will be the perpetual memorials of this far-sightedness."

To these words of his friend and former pastor, may be added the observation of another, that "the most noticeable thing about his service to the cause of Christ was the fact that he was far broader and wiser than his early training and experience would lead us to expect. He had but small school advantages in his youth: yet he gave his money and his influence, and not a little hard work, to schools of higher learning."

But we must not prolong these reflections.

Enough has been said to point out the chief features of his character, and the main lines of his great usefulness. Will any one say that our view of him as here expressed has been too eulogistic, that it has been too highly colored by personal affection? Possibly so. Yet we have tried to give nothing but a just representation of his life, and a true view of the feelings and motives that filled his heart. Faults of course he had, like every other member of our sinful race; and he would be the last one to sanction any words which might declare him free from infirmities. Yet, while he always showed forth exactly what he was, no stigma could ever fasten itself to his name; and his excellences have been so striking as to make him in many respects a bright example. Of him it could be said that those who knew him best, honored him most. Such had the opportunity of testing the purity of his life and the consecration of his purposes. They became familiar with the man upon all sides of his character, and, striking the true balance between his virtues and his faults, were ready to love and praise him. As that fallen tree is missed the most from the grove or the landscape, which sent down its roots the deepest, and spread out its shade the farthest, and reached up to heaven the highest, so the loss of him is felt

to be a great one on account of the strength of his character and the breadth of his beneficence. He has gone to join the great company of the redeemed, who have proved their faith by their works. He has gone to enjoy the blessed reward which the Lord has in store for those who humbly trust in his name, and who endeavor to glorify him according to his commandments. Gardner Colby now rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. It remains for his children and his children's children to revere his memory, and to emulate his virtues; for his associates and acquaintances in business, to imitate his example of uprightness and benevolence; for all who knew him, to follow him so far as he followed Christ.

ADDRESS AT THE FUNERAL.

BY REV. O. S. STEARNS, D.D.

IT is fitting that we pause for an hour, and in this house, which was so emphatically the home of our friend, recall him, and bid him live in our presence. The form is before us. The spirit which animated it has departed. But the life it enshrined is ours, and will continue to be ours while time is ours. We cannot separate him from our thoughts, nor can we sunder him from our lives. He was ours; we were his. He lived in us; we lived in him. A friend whose frank and honest bearing led us to accept in his acts the sincerity of a manly heart; a friend who could reprove with fidelity, as well as cheer with sympathy; a friend whose words were bonds, and whose deeds harmonized with his words, — cannot be eliminated from our lives by passing from us into another sphere of existence. Like the air we breathe, like the thoughts we think, subtile yet real, the memories of departing loved ones enter into the substance of our lives, and constitute a large part of our earthly happiness.

To Mr. Colby this house was not a mere residence. It was his home; the retreat of his soul from the wearying cares of business; the resting-place towards which his soul trembled as naturally as the needle to the pole. He sought to make it a happy home, where he and his could feel as one, free from needless restraint, each sharing the other's joys, aspirations, and plans, all working together for the good of all. He endeavored to make it an

honored home, where true honor sat enthroned, and petty littlenesses were trampled under foot. More than all, he labored to make it a Christian home, where personal piety assumed its rightful place; where personal religion was a topic of familiar conversation; where the children were expected to "seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness;" and where the family-altar, the place of social prayer, the worship of God in his sanctuary, were acknowledged to be as essential parts of a true existence as the education of the schools, the preparation for business, or the attainment of high places among men.

I recollect an hour, some thirty years ago, when at the morning devotions, though several clergymen were present, he read the Scriptures and prayed himself. It surprised me at the time, knowing, as I did, his extreme sensitiveness as to performing such public acts; but I reverenced his conscientiousness, when, soon after, he said to me, "You do not know what that act cost me; but I feel, that, as the head of my family, I must be known and recognized as a Christian." This, however, was not his uniform custom. None more than he enjoyed the prayers of others on such occasions.

To live and walk with God in his home, was his ideal of domestic happiness and power; and none will ever know the central spring of that heart which has now ceased to beat, except those who have seen him here, and enjoyed him here. Here it was that the child and the man felt the magnetism of his genuine, genial nature.

As I seek to delineate the character of our friend as he appeared to me, I regard him as a man of great energy of character. From early life he was thrown upon his own resources, and was compelled to make himself. With a very limited education, with few to aid him, with much to discourage him, from his youth he felt that all he was to be depended upon himself, and

upon himself alone. He has often said to me, repeating the saying in my last interview with him but one, "No man is a man who does not make himself so much of a man as to be needed by his fellows." And he wrought his life by this maxim, toiling hard and struggling hopefully to make himself a necessity. His favorite hymn was the talisman of his life : —

"Oh, watch, and fight, and pray!
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore."

If there is one text of Scripture which he emphasized and exemplified most perfectly, it was the exhortation of the Preacher, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." In his most playful moods, you were sure to be startled suddenly by the suggestion of some plan of action with which his mind was teeming. His mind worked rapidly and orderly. He had the rare power of concentrating it upon a subject, holding that subject with a firm grasp, and compelling every thing allied to it to play into the execution of its main purpose. The method by which it was to be developed, he deemed the wisest one, resting, as he thought, upon the truest principles of foresight and right; and, so earnest was he in the result to which his mature thinking had come, all obstacles must give way to it. He was bound to put it through. And, so strong was his personality, those who were to be executors of his purposes often seemed to move like automata under the energy of his single will. All who knew him regarded him as a man of marvellous sagacity ; and, as a consequence, men of culture sought him for his good judgment, men of business for his experience, and men engaged in large Christian enterprises for his far-sighted discretion. As a merchant, and as a friend of the denomination to which he belonged, few have filled

so large a sphere of influence; and to few has been conceded such unquestioned ability.

But to see the man, we must blend with his energy of character his benevolence of heart. To those who knew him intimately this trait was always apparent; but to those less familiar with him, his quick, brusque manner, his strong expression of his convictions, the imperial tone of his voice, doubtless led some to believe that he was cold and unsympathizing, wilful and exacting. They did not understand the man; and in no one of my acquaintance dwelt a warmer heart, or a soul more responsive to real need.

It is true, that in his acts of beneficence he did not pour his treasures into the lap of the needy with a mere impulsive generosity. He did not give without forethought. He gave upon well-grounded principle. He weighed as accurately as he could the relative claims of the objects which appealed to him for aid. He demanded a full and truthful statement of all the facts in the case; but when they were apprehended, if deserving his assistance, the claim received a ready response. I need not speak of his noble gifts to institutions of learning, and to various Christian enterprises. They are well known. They have built a monument to his memory which time will never destroy. I refer rather to that tenderness of spirit, expressed by the irresistible tear at the story of human suffering, the warm grasp of the hand in the hour of needed sympathy, and the broken tones of the voice, which meant more than words could speak. It was easy for him who knew the key to unlock the secrets of such a heart. "The cause he knew not, he searched out;" but when found out, "he was eyes to the blind, and feet was he to the lame;" "the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." Instances without number come before me, where the appeal of the father

to aid his son, the request of the mother to cherish her children, and the desire for help by some young man struggling with poverty, were responded to quick as thought; and the joy of his soul in his ability to comfort another soul seemed to exceed the happiness of those thus benefited.

But that to which he traced all his prosperity was his firm belief in the providential care of God. I remember a private interview in this house, during the financial troubles of '57, when he knew not what was to be on the morrow. We entered each other's hearts. We wept, and we prayed. He laid bare his past life. "His life," he said, "had been a miracle of divine labor. He had been wonderfully provided for, and as wonderfully delivered when he came to those strange passes where two ways meet. He had been conscious for years of a mysterious, guiding hand. He could not define it, he was totally unworthy of it; but the rescuing hand had always appeared at the right time." Now his faith wavered. He could not pierce the cloud of the morrow. "What will be on the morrow?" said he. I tried to re-assure him, by affirming that God would not forsake him, and that on the morrow he would find a way of escape; and bade him "good-night." And I shall not soon forget his "joy of faith," when I next met him, as he told me the story of the deliverance which God had wrought for him, effecting it in a way totally unexplainable to himself.

I recall, too, the growth of his Christian graces about the same period of his life, when he nerved himself up to lead a Sunday-morning prayer-meeting, triumphing over his natural diffidence, and encouraging his fellow-Christians by their mutual faith.

He was a firm believer in the protecting care of his heavenly Father, and in the all-sufficiency of sovereign grace. His sense of sin was deep and genuine. His trust in Christ was as implicit as one so little inclined to introspection could expect.

But his life, his life from childhood through manhood, he felt to be a charmed life, on account of the presence and help of his God. Although always in the house of God, at the appointed hour, when it was possible to be there; although conscientious in his attendance upon the social and business meetings of the church; although ever ready to cheer on those laboring to build the walls of Jerusalem, — he did not rely upon such acts for his present and ultimate acceptance with God. He knew too well the weakness and errings of his heart to indulge such a blind faith. But he knew, also, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;" and he hoped in God, "who was the health of his countenance, and his God."

His last hours, so full of tender farewells, are all fragrant with this abiding faith in God. These farewells are the pressed sentences from the lessons of his life's experience. "I am ready to die," he said: "I have laid down my armor." "I can only trust in my Saviour." "Jesus Christ is my all." "Christ is every thing; I can do nothing of myself." "When I look at my imperfections, I turn to my Saviour." Such were some of the precious utterances which will be fondly remembered by the cherished loved ones of his heart.

In my last interview, I repeated to him parts of the twenty-third Psalm; and when I came to the verse which says, "Though I walk through the valley and shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me," — emphasizing the word "comfort," I asked him if he could say *that;* when, looking at me with the old, familiar, confiding, earnest look, he replied, with the word characteristic of him when specially pleased, "Beautiful! Those are beautiful words." And when I repeated two lines of one of his favorite hymns, —

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want!
More than all in thee I find,"—

he responded, "Jesus is enough: Jesus is all."

And there submissively we leave him, singing, as we may believe, "unto Him that hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and honor and dominion forever. Amen."

ADDRESS AT THE FUNERAL.

BY REV. ALVAH HOVEY, D.D., LL.D.

THREE days ago a neighbor came to my door, and tenderly said, "Our friend Colby sleepeth." The message was not a surprise, for I had been expecting for a little while that the change would soon come. Yet the words moved me deeply, and carried my thoughts swiftly back over a third of a century to the hour when I first met this friend and brother. He was then thirty-five years old, and I distinctly recall the impression which he made upon me at that time. He was treasurer of the Institution, and I called at his room in the Mansion House on the hill. Greeting me kindly as a new student, he proceeded naturally and at once to the business which brought me to him. Meanwhile I could not fail to observe his countenance and bearing, the decision of his manner, the directness of his words, the penetration of his look, and the many signs of character, of purpose, and of energy, that appeared in the man with whom I was dealing.

The acquaintance which was thus begun in the autumn of 1845, and continued through my course in the seminary, was pleasantly renewed upon my return to Newton; and gradually, as our relations to the Institution and to the church brought us more frequently together, acquaintance ripened into assured friendship, so that for a score of years I have felt that no difference of taste or of opinion would be able to disturb our mutual confidence. For this reason, I have been requested to say a few words in respect

to that part of his life with which I am most familiar, — his connection with institutions of learning and with foreign missions.

Mr. Colby was distinctly a man of clear purpose, working for definite ends. In harmony with this trait of his character, he early resolved to use some part of his income for objects of benevolence which his judgment approved. How deeply he pondered the duties of life, or the particular way in which he could best honor God and serve mankind, before forming this purpose, I know not; but, from what I have learned in later years respecting his character, I am sure that it was not formed without careful thought, and that when formed it was not a *mere* purpose, signifying nothing beyond itself. For with Mr. Colby, as with all effective workers among men, thought and purpose were in order to action. To resolve was to do. Hence he began to give when he began to gain; and in his later years he sometimes expressed the belief, that, if he had refused to give in his early life, he would probably have continued to do so to the end. Yet he was never troubled with regret for what he had done in behalf of religion or of education. However keenly, in the days of his strength, he enjoyed the excitement and competition involved in "buying and selling, and getting gain," he has often testified that his greatest satisfaction was in what he had given, and not in what he had acquired. Nor is this at all surprising; for the Lord himself has said that "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and no man who has supported a worthy cause with a right spirit and a liberal hand has ever failed of the blessing.

The beneficence of our friend was rarely misdirected, for it was rarely thoughtless. Resting upon principle, it was applied to the support of enterprises which commended themselves to his judgment, as well as to his heart. He loved to assist in laying foundations for the time to come. He was ready to identify himself with institutions that gave promise of good when he should have passed

away. And he was resolute and hopeful when difficulties multiplied, and the courage of many failed. Once interested in a cause, he was always its friend.

From the age of thirty-two to the age of fifty-six, — a period of twenty-four years, — Mr. Colby was treasurer of the Newton Theological Institution; and it is simply just to say that he discharged the duties of his office with eminent ability and success. During the first ten years of that period, it required no ordinary courage and skill to preserve the Institution from bankruptcy. Temporary expedients had been resorted to in meeting the current expenses, until the churches were dissatisfied with them, and demanded relief: yet few believed it possible to secure an adequate permanent fund. But the treasurer did not lose heart: vigilance, promptness, personal supervision, were everywhere manifest. With unconquerable purpose and inward assurance of success, he sustained the burden that was laid upon him, and looked forward with hope to a brighter day. At the end of ten years' service he was permitted to greet the dawn of that day; and, though the fund then raised was insufficient to make the seminary all that it ought to be made, it was a foundation laid securely, on which good men were certain to build in due time.

During the last ten years Mr. Colby has been president of the Board of Trustees. The duties of this office have been less arduous than those of the treasurer; but he has so performed these duties as to prove his undiminished regard for the seminary. Through thirty-four years of official service has he carried in his heart the welfare of this school of Biblical theology.

That our brother who now sleeps in Jesus was a true friend and a great benefactor of the Institution, that he loved it, planned for it, toiled for it, prayed for it, believed in its usefulness, rejoiced in its growth, desired its improvement, and associated it in thought with the progress of true religion among men, — many of you well

know; but none of you can be as familiar with certain parts of his service to it as myself, and none of you have so much reason to be thankful to God for that service. Many a secret rill from the fountain of his heart have I directed to students who were in need; and I rejoice that his name will be connected with the Institution till its work is done.

But, while our own seminary was the first to gain the heart and support of Mr. Colby, it was not the last or the only seat of learning that profited by his bounty. There is a college in his native State, and within sight of a place where he played in childhood, that has put on new strength and beauty as the result of his munificence. It was a college that had been founded by noble men of his own religious faith, that had rendered important service to the cause of sound learning, that had struggled with poverty, and had deserved assistance, and that could be made, as he believed, a glory and blessing to mankind. I happened to be in Waterville when his gift of fifty thousand dollars to the college was announced, and I well remember the joy which it brought to many hearts. The future of the college was felt to be assured by his act, and from that hour to this it has steadily advanced in character and work. This greatest benefaction of Mr. Colby was followed from time to time by others, and by such personal interest in the University, now called by his name, as it was possible for a man with his other cares to feel. Many an hour during the last three years has he spent with me in conversation respecting that college, and I am sure that his love to it became one of the deepest feelings of his heart. And if we consider the needs of the college when he came to its relief, the sum of his gifts in comparison with what it had received from any one before, and the efforts which he made to enlist the good-will of others in its behalf, we shall be almost ready to pronounce his work for that seat of learning the noblest work of his life.

But his interest in Waterville did not prevent him from doing service elsewhere for the same cause. He was a liberal benefactor of Brown University, from which two of his sons were graduated, and was for many years an active and honored member of its corporation. In its welfare he rejoiced, and for its growing usefulness he was solicitous.

But his interest in these seats of learning was not only literary, but also and chiefly religious. He believed in *Christian* education, and contributed to the support of it as a means of spreading the light of divine truth over the world. It is not therefore surprising that he was also a warm friend and steady advocate of foreign missions. How much he gave for the spread of the gospel in other lands, I cannot tell, though I am certain that the average of his contributions for the last nineteen years has not been less than a thousand dollars a year. And his interest in this holy cause was often expressed by words as well as deeds, by his presence at the monthly concert of prayer for missions, and by his abundant hospitality to laborers in the foreign field. Few of us have entertained as many of the Lord's heroes — like Judson and Oncken — as were welcomed to his delightful home by our brother. And now his spirit, released from earth, has already, it may well be, resumed its fellowship with them in the world of light. How many dark providences will be made luminous there ! How many burdens will be left behind, and pains forgotten ! How many difficulties removed, and questions answered, and doubts silenced, and hopes fulfilled ! Our friend and brother, though deeply conscious of ill-desert before God, was one who trusted in the Saviour, and fervently desired to have all men do the same. He would not suffer me, if he were present, to say that he was faultless ; but he would, I believe, allow me to say that he was willing to work with his might for the highest cause while he lived, and that he leaned

upon the arm of Christ when he died. This, then, is our comfort to-day.

Neighbors, friends, and kindred, we now bid farewell to one who has filled a large place among us, who has run strenuously the race of life, who has builded monuments that will endure, and who has not been ashamed of Jesus, — but who has also felt the pains of disease, and has welcomed the summons to the life beyond. We believe it is well with him there. We believe that the Lord whom he served has taken him from the home below to the home on high.

TRIBUTE

BY REV. HEMAN LINCOLN, D.D.

[From "The Watchman."]

THE death of Mr. Colby, which occurred at his home in Newton, April 2, leaves a great gap in Baptist ranks. For nearly forty years he has been a recognized leader, honored and loved; wise in counsel, hearty in sympathy, generous in gifts. We can recall the name of no layman in our New-England history, whose services have been so long and so valuable; who has given so freely of time and brain and money for denominational interests.

He was born to be a leader. No intelligent observer could mark the broad brow, the searching eye, the firm lips, the compact frame, without a perception of the great personal force that lay behind them. No one could come into close personal intercourse without feeling his power. He was accustomed to have his own way, and carry his own ends; but it was by virtue of stronger convictions, and superior energy of purpose, and tenacity of will. He did not forfeit his own self-respect in the means used, nor wound the self-respect of others. In the most eager struggle for mastery, he never forgot the duties of a Christian gentleman.

His life, from opening manhood, was singularly happy and successful. He was never bereaved of brother or sister: his brothers and sister survive him. Death never entered his own family-circle: wife and sons and daughters all live to mourn his loss. Nor was the peace of his home marred by the sorer griefs that come to so many parents. It was an almost ideal Christian

home, controlled by principle, and filled with an atmosphere of joy. He ruled his household, but love mellowed the rule; and his children grew up to call him blessed. No man had more reason to be proud of his sons, all inheriting his principles, his large heart and open hand, and aspirations for a useful life.

Nor was his business-life less fortunate than his home, during the larger part of its history. The struggles of boyhood, when the father's fortune as ship-builder was wrecked by the war with England, in 1812–15, taught him self-reliance. The example of a noble mother, whose energy and sagacity provided a home and an education for the children, nurtured this spirit; and from 1832, when he commenced business on a capital borrowed from his mother, until 1870, success attended him with a uniformity scarcely broken.

Repeated changes from a retail trade to an importing commission, to a wholesale dry-goods business, and to the manufacture of woollens, only enlarged his fortune, and proved his business-capacity. His name in the mercantile world was a synonym for insight and energy. In 1870 he became president of the Wisconsin Central Road, and undertook the gigantic task of building a road for three hundred and forty miles, a large part of it through primeval forests. No better test could be given of his extraordinary business capacity than his success in pushing the road to completion in the face of the appalling monetary troubles of the last few years. It was an herculean task, but his courage never failed till the work was done. The burden of toil and anxiety was no doubt too heavy for his advanced years, and developed the disease which at length proved fatal.

Mr. Colby has been known chiefly by his benevolence. His gifts have been large and uniform and cheerful. In early manhood he was associated with those noble laymen, Cobb and Farwell and Freeman and Kendall, and the Lincolns, Ensign and

Heman. He caught their spirit, and has exceeded them all in the largeness of his gifts. He began to give freely as clerk, with a small salary, and gave freely from that time to the day of his death. He gave on principle, not from impulse; and no worthy claimant was turned from his door. His courage and hopefulness did much to save Newton and Waterville in dark hours; and his large donations stimulated others to create the endowments which assured the future prosperity of these institutions. His benefactions were liberal to Brown University, and to other institutions, and flowed in a perennial stream to the Missionary Union, and to other agencies for Christian work at home and abroad. It was an occasion of grief to him, that many Christians are penurious in charities; and he often annexed conditions to his gifts, to develop benevolence in others.

His death was peaceful and triumphant, before his eye had dimmed, or his mental force abated. A great company gathered at the funeral services, conducted by Dr. Clarke; and the tributes of Drs. Hovey and Stearns to his character were eminently beautiful and just, while the prayer of Dr. Hague, a former pastor, filled all hearts with peace, and a sense of God's infinite grace. The grave closed over a good and useful man, and his place will be hard to fill among the living.

REMARKS

BY HON. J. W. MERRILL,

AT THE BAPTIST SOCIAL UNION, BOSTON.

I HAVE been associated with Mr. Colby for thirty or more years in the various missionary, educational, and other philanthropic movements of our denomination, and have been accustomed to look to him for the devising of liberal plans, for an example of generous giving of time, thought, and money, and for a courage and resolution that knew no discouragement when other men's hearts failed them.

I remember well when the large endowment was being made up for Newton, and it was within a few days of the time limited to make the sum up, and make the subscription binding, when we were informed by the agent that he should fail to accomplish it, as the time was not long enough to secure so large a sum as was then lacking (some thirty thousand dollars, I think), Mr. Colby at once left his business, and engaged for some days in personal solicitation; and had the satisfaction of seeing the thing accomplished.

He had a strong and clear conviction that knowledge is power in a denomination as in an individual, and that the triumph of the principles in which he believed with all his heart must be secured by the union of sound learning with true piety; and nothing gave him greater pleasure than to count over the names of the eminent men in the various walks of life all over our country, who are useful and honored, and who owe their power, in part at least, to the training they received in these institutions.

He occupied one of the most responsible, trying, and dangerous positions in the world, — that of a wealthy Christian. It is a solemn assertion of our Saviour, that "it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Let those who are in danger be thankful that he also said, "But all things are possible with God." Our brother sought the kingdom of heaven first; and, in accordance with the promise, all these things were added unto him. He accepted them, however, not as his for the gratification of himself alone; but he felt that he must "occupy till *He* comes," and use as a wise steward for the Giver's glory.

Early in Christian life, I am told, he began to give away money as he was able. As he gave, his means increased; and he formed large plans for doing good with what he had and what he hoped to acquire. He lived to accomplish some of his plans, and I have reason to know that some of them were not accomplished when he died. His mantle has fallen on worthy shoulders, — sons who fully appreciated their father's noble life-work, and whose hearts are in full sympathy with it.

He early discovered that indiscriminate giving of money was not the best use to make of it, but he was accustomed to make careful examination and inquiry in order to give wisely. He thus saved his money at the expense of his time. Some one has sung, —

"Pity the sorrows of a poor old man."

He might have sung, "Pity the sorrows of a generous rich man." He was beset in season and out of season by applicants for his money, and each thought his object the most important and worthy of his consideration.

Often when engaged in his office or counting-room some one would make his way in, with the assurance that he would detain him but a moment; and, though informed that he was

engaged, would sit and occupy his time for half an hour, and on leaving would say, "I see you are busy: I will call at your house."

After his large gift to Waterville he was pestered by all kinds of demands. For example, one old lady, whom I think he never saw or heard of before, wanted him to buy her a house, and assured him that she needed it much more than Waterville needed fifty thousand dollars.

But none of these things moved him: he kept his genial good humor; and instead of saying, "I will give no more money away," he selected such causes and objects as he had confidence in, and regularly and systematically gave to them.

But he was not contented with this: he made it a study to influence others to benevolent deeds. If he saw a young man prosperous in business, or an old man who had made money, he made it in his way, whenever an opportunity occurred, to interest him in some good object, and gradually lead him to know the blessedness of investing in it.

Even when most occupied with his business, his mind was constantly turning to his plans for accomplishing good to his fellow-men, and he was constantly devising liberal things.

Who shall take up and wear his mantle?

As to our friend's business-life, I must leave that to those who were more intimately acquainted with it.

I was associated for a few years with him in his last great enterprise, — the building of a vast railroad system in the West. I remonstrated with him against taking upon himself, so late in life, such vast and complicated responsibilities; but when he assured me that he must do something to keep his mind employed, and I found he was decided to go forward, I joined him to a limited extent, and know something of what a burden he carried for the rest of his life.

I doubt if our country can show so much accomplished by one man under such adverse circumstances.

Almost as soon as he had built and paid for the first hundred miles of the road, the financial embarrassment, under which the country has ever since labored, began. But he pushed forward, saying that if he was ever good for any thing he was good in a storm. He raised large sums of money, always, as I have reason to believe, until laid aside by sickness, contributing his full quota, and sometimes more; and as president of the road, and trustee for all parties, discharging his duties in a most self-denying and conscientious manner.

He accomplished what he undertook to do, and lived to see the road finished to its terminus at the foot of Lake Superior, a monument, built in troublous times, to pluck and indomitable perseverance under most discouraging circumstances.

MEMORIAL POEM.

READ AT THE MEETING OF THE BAPTIST SOCIAL UNION, APRIL 28, 1879.

BY REV. S. F. SMITH, D.D.

PASSED from our sight, but grandly living still,
As glows the light behind the western hill,
When towering summits hide the vanished sun,
And the long course of weary day is run;
The disk concealed, the brightness backward turns, —
For other lands the same full radiance burns:
A noble life, cut off, still journeys on, —
A trail of light behind it, when 'tis gone,
And life before, — a faithful life's reward;
A joy to earth, and, ever with the Lord.

We hail thee, brother, — favored now to see
Unveiled at last life's doubt and mystery;
What fields thy works have blessed, what conquests, won,
Attest the worthy deeds thy hands have done.
What hungry mouths thy willing love has fed;
What souls enjoyed, through thee, the living Bread;
To what rich seeds thy life has given wings,
Sheaves for the garner of the King of kings;
What halls of learning, fostered by thy care,
Have nurtured MEN, whose lips are trained to bear,
To nations born, and nations yet to be,
Tidings of life and immortality.

Dost thou, from heaven, the honest praise disclaim,
Caring no more for earth or earthly fame?
Not for thyself we weave these honored bays,
Yet for thyself, and for the Saviour's praise.

All that was great in thee we cherish still, —
All that accorded with the Master's will:
Thousands the lessons of thy life shall read, —
The kind in word, the generous in deed;
The ready, helpful hand, the open heart,
The soul to plead, the tender tear to start;
The wealth of hand and brain, to yield supply
To every worthy work, or low, or high;
Accounting nothing small which God deems great;
So prompt to act, so patient too to wait;
Holding, of right, with men an honored seat,
But laying all things at the Master's feet.

Long will his memory live in many a land,
Long the foundations which he planted stand;
And grateful thousands shall, with glad acclaim,
Breathe from full hearts their blessings on his name.

We leave thee, brother, and our way pursue;
Patient to bear, and prompt, like thee, to do.
Be ours, like thine, through grace, the victory won,
And ours, like thine, the Master's glad "Well done!

A LIFE OF SERVICE.

EXTRACT FROM THE BACCALAUREATE SERMON PREACHED AT WATERVILLE, ME., JULY 20th, 1879.

BY REV. HENRY E. ROBINS, D.D., PRESIDENT OF COLBY UNIVERSITY.

THAT the conviction that a life of service is the only true life of man controlled Mr. Colby, is as certain as that he was a Christian. For a Christian, by virtue of the fact that he is a Christian, is a servant of God and his fellow-men. Into this character he is brought by his union with Christ by faith. Christ not only teaches that by as much as a man possesses more of power, of gifts of any sort, whether material, intellectual, or moral, he is by so much a servant of others, but he does that without which his teaching would accomplish no more than the teaching of Socrates, — he inspires those who believe in him, with power to illustrate his teachings by their lives as he illustrated them by his life. We do not hesitate to claim that it was because Mr. Colby was a partaker, through faith, of the life of his ascended Lord, we are permitted to-day to rejoice in the service which it was his high honor to render to his fellow-men.

We are authorized to do this, not only because he bore the name of Christ, but by the evidence of a significant sentiment which was often on his lips. In an interview shortly before his death he repeated with emphasis the words, "No man is a man who does not make himself so much a man as to be needed by his fellow-men," — words fit to be chiselled on the marble which marks his tomb. Mr. Colby thus opened his heart to us, and

suffers us to see the springs of his action. He sought to make himself a necessity by service rendered to others. He gave so bountifully of his wealth, not from the promptings of ambition, not to gain a name and build for himself a monument. However lower and subordinate motives may have actuated him, — and they doubtless did impel him; far be it from us to claim for him a perfection exhibited only by the Lord whom he served, a perfection which he would have shuddered to claim for himself, — nevertheless the deepest, the generic motive of his action, which alone is the touchstone of character, was his sense of obligation to serve, to the utmost of his ability, his fellow-men, as a service to God. Accordingly in the closing hours of his life, as we are informed by those whose privilege it was to minister to him then, when he was thoughtfully reviewing his work, he declared that what gave him his deepest satisfaction was not that which he had achieved for himself, but that which he had done for the public interests with which he had been identified.

Not, however, to the fact that Mr. Colby bore the name of Christ, nor to his words, nor to any single act of munificent giving alone, do we make an appeal, but to the general tenor of his life, "known and read of all men." In the morning of his career he recognized the obligation of service. He did not wait, therefore, for overflowing coffers, before he began to bless others by his benefactions. Had he done so, — this is his own thought repeatedly expressed, — he would never have learned the art of princely giving. He began to give when he began to accumulate, and thus enlisted the mighty energy of habit on the side of virtue. Nor did he wait for the leisure which wealth could command, before he gave time and thought, more valuable than money, to the furtherance of public ends. Leisure, indeed, he never knew, and, with his views, could never know. The right use of the powers with which he had been intrusted by God — in other words, industry — he saw to

be a duty, from which no amount of wealth could exempt him. Idleness, by whomsoever indulged, was to him a sin. For more than a generation, interests not his own, and public interests many and various in their claims, had the benefit of his sagacious counsels, his untiring labors, his contagious enthusiasm, his generous benefactions. Surely we may say, while reverently recognizing the moral distance which must always separate the imperfect disciple from his peerless Master, that Mr. Colby was inspired by the spirit of Him who said, "I am among you as he that serveth."

Let us notice that this conception of life also insures *constancy* of service. It is a *life* of service to which the true man devotes himself. Not exceptional to the general course of his thought and action are his deeds of beneficence. His way resembles not the path of the meteor, but the path of the sun which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. One of Mr. Colby's most remarkable characteristics was the persistency of his devotion to any cause to which he had committed himself. No difficulties daunted him, no discouragement dampened his ardor. His fidelity to the cause he had espoused caused men to depend upon him with singular confidence, because it shone only the more conspicuously in days of darkness and desertion. Other men would give time and money on occasions, but were careful not to take up public institutions as personal burdens; but he took them into his heart, and cherished them as a man cherishes his children. Even when most engrossed with the care of his private fortune, he would turn with alacrity and with a sense of relief, as he used to say, to plan for their welfare. In the constancy of his service, he was a prince among his fellows, almost without a peer.

As a final lesson, let it be noticed that this conception of life insured *breadth of sympathy* in service. The true servant cannot be a narrow man. He has undertaken to serve, not this interest or that interest, but mankind; and he has entered upon this service

not self-moved, but inspired by Him who, being no respecter of persons, loved and served the race. Accordingly we find that Mr. Colby was distinguished for the breadth of his views in the service which he rendered. It was not narrowed by kindred, or town, or state, or nation: his was a service to mankind. No one can read his will, and note the scope and amount of his bequests, without being impressed by a certain grandeur. It bears the impress of an extraordinarily noble nature. The figures dictated by his own lips are his most eloquent eulogy. Had he been actuated by selfish and ambitious motives, he might well have concentrated upon this university all the benefactions he bequeathed to various institutions. When on one occasion it was suggested that he would do this, he repelled the thought. He sought only, as he repeatedly said, to be an efficient fellow-helper with others in building a monument for the honor of Christ, in a well-endowed and well-conducted Christian college. His bequest is only an encouragement and generous challenge to the friends of Christian education to perfect the work so auspiciously begun. Although himself deprived of the advantages of a liberal education, his native sagacity enabled him clearly to see its necessity as indispensable to the triumph of Christian civilization. Feeling keenly his own need, he labored unweariedly while living to extend its benefits to others, and dying made provision to bless generations yet unborn.

MEMORIAL

BY THE TRUSTEES OF NEWTON THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

At the annual meeting of the Trustees of Newton Theological Institution, held June 10, 1879, the following paper was unanimously adopted: —

It pleased God on the 2d of April, 1879, to release from his earthly labors and responsibilities, and to call to his reward, our brother Mr. Gardner Colby, the President of this Board of Trustees. To us this is a great bereavement. A life of extraordinary usefulness has closed, and a man of remarkable power has been removed from our body.

From the commencement of his successful career as a merchant, Mr. Colby identified himself closely with the missionary and educational enterprises of the Baptist denomination, not only as a liberal contributor, but also by his personal and untiring efforts in their behalf. In 1843 he was elected a member of this Board of Trustees. In the year following, 1844, he was elected to fill the place made vacant by the death of Hon. Levi Farwell, the first Treasurer. For twenty-four years he retained this trust, and discharged its heavy responsibilities with great fidelity, sagacity, and success. He not only administered the finances of the Institution wisely, but also superintended the real and personal estate belonging to it in a most satisfactory manner. And for nine years he has been our able and efficient President.

During this long period of service, thirty-six years, Mr. Colby has manifested a very deep and unceasing interest in the welfare

and growth of this school of sacred learning. He has not only cared for the minute details of its business, but he has been among the foremost of the originators and promoters of every organized movement to broaden its foundations and extend its usefulness. He has been one of the most liberal contributors, not only to its ever-recurring special needs, but also to its permanent endowment. And his last will and testament affords evidence that his love for the Institution remained strong till death.

Though himself denied the advantages of a liberal education, Mr. Colby was in full sympathy with the most enthusiastic educators in his estimate of the importance to the Christian minister of sound learning and high culture, and second to none in his efforts to place the means of securing such helps within reach of the candidates for the sacred calling.

It seems becoming that as members of this Board we should record our grateful recognition and appreciation of God's wisdom and goodness in raising up such a man, and sustaining him through a life of such abundant and protracted usefulness, and our deep sorrow that we shall enjoy his presence and share his wise and efficient co-operation in our responsible work no more.

We make this record also in the hope that the contemplation of such an example of Christian benevolence and faithful service may stimulate us and our successors to carry forward the enterprise which now seems so worthy of his labors and munificence, and which will ever reflect such honor upon his name.

MEMORIAL

BY THE TRUSTEES OF COLBY UNIVERSITY.

At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees of Colby University, held at Waterville, July 22, A. D. 1879, the following was adopted as an expression of the Board in regard to their late associate : —

As, in the providence of God, Gardner Colby, Esq., one of our associates in the management of the University which bears his name, on the 2d of April last departed this life, we, in order to express our appreciation of his character and of the importance of his gifts and services to the institution, place on our records the following minute : —

Mr. Colby was a Christian gentleman of the highest character and the largest benevolence, which were fully shown in all the relations of life, through a course of intense business activity from his youth up. He came to the aid of our college at the time of its greatest need, when the number of its students was greatly diminished by enlistments in the Union armies, its funds almost wholly exhausted, its buildings in a ruinous condition, and general discouragement pervaded the minds of its friends.

His offer of fifty thousand dollars soon secured the other hundred thousand upon which it was conditioned, forming at once the foundation of a permanent fund ; and subsequent offers secured other contributions with which new buildings were erected, and the old ones repaired, and thus an entirely new face put upon things.

A man of remarkable judgment as he was, he showed it in noth-

ing more than in conditioning his subscriptions on others to be made by other friends, thus securing large contributions and augmented interests. He came, as he often said, not to undertake to carry the college himself, but to help others carry it. He was willing to work, but wanted others to work with him. His whole connection with the University was eminently useful, closing only with his death, which revealed still larger purposes in regard to the institution in the noble bequest which in time, under favorable circumstances and wise management, may amount to an addition of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars to its funds, which the trustees hereby gratefully acknowledge and highly appreciate as evidence of his unabated interest to the last.

Such a life and such benefactions make his name a most appropriate and honorable prefix in the designation of the University.

Resolved, That a copy of this testimonial be communicated to his family, with the sympathy of the Trustees, and that the same be published in "Zion's Advocate."

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